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Flashback, preserving the
past for the future

Volume 52 Winter 2002 Number 1

Mrs. Young and Her Building

WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Washington County Historical Society

118 East Dickson Street, Fayetteville, AR 72701

Flashback is published quarterly in the winter, spring, summer and fall. Send all material for publication to the editor at 118 East Dickson Street, Fayetteville, AR 72701. There is no payment for articles published in Flashback. The editor retains the right to edit all submitted articles prior to publication.

Membership is invited of those interested in preservation of Washington County's history. Dues are $25 annually for a General Membership and $15 annually for Student, Seniors, or Public Library Memberships. Donations, tax deductible according to current law, are gratefully received any time for special projects. Members are mailed Flashback every quarter. Past issues cost $6 each.

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Cover Photo: The Mrs. Young Building and the Bank of Fayetteville as they look today on the Fayetteville Square.

FLASHBACK

Preserving the Past for the Future

Volume 52 Winter 2002 Number 1

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WCHS Home Page

To call up the Washington County Historical Society's home page go to:
www.ipa.net/~wchs
The Society's E-mail address is wchs@ipa.net

WCHS Names Distinguished Citizens

The Washington County Historical Society has named Clark McClinton and Dr. Jim Mashburn as the recipients of the Society's Distinguished Citizen Awards. The presentations of the awards were made during the Society's annual meeting at the Clarion Inn in Fayetteville. The presentation to Mr. McClinton was made by John Lewis, and the presentation to Dr. Mashburn was made by Jonathan Story.

Dr. Jim Mashburn

Dr. Jim Mashburn was born in 1925 and is a longtime resident of Fayetteville. He delivered over 10,000 babies in Washington County between 1947 and 1988, when he retired.

In many cases, he cared for several generations within one family and often cared for the poor without charge. He is recalled as an "old-time" physician who would make house calls and sit at the patient's bedside.

Mr. Clark McClinton (left) and Dr. Jim Mashburn named WCHS Distinguished Citizens.

During the Korean War, he served as physician to the 936th and 142nd Field Artillery and retired as a brigadier general. He served as chief of staff at Washington Regional Medical Center, receiving the Eagle Award from the WRMC Foundation in 1996.

He was appointed to the State Police Commission, where he served for 11 years under three governors, and he has served on the Fayetteville City Police Retirement Board and the McIroy Bank Board of Directors.

He co-founded the Barbara Mashburn Scholarship Foundation, which provides vocal music scholarships. Throughout the years, Dr. Mashburn has been an outstanding citizen who has served his community in numerous ways that made significant and lasting contributions to Washington County.

Mr. Clark McClinton

Clark McClinton was born in 1913 at 125 W. Lafayette Street in Fayetteville. In the 1940s, he and wife Marie lived at Waxhaws, the historic home of Archibald Yell.

While building his business, McClinton-Anchor, he served the community on the Fayetteville Planning Commission, School Board, Chamber of Commerce, Washington County Election Commission, Methodist Jurisdictional Conference, Salvation Army, Red Cross, City Hospital Development Council, and the University of Arkansas Development Council. He has been a Mason, Shriner, Rotary district governor and chairman of the National Limestone Institute in Washington, D.C.

During his term on the School Board, Fayetteville landmarks were built such as Bates Elementary, Root Elementary, Ramay Junior High, Woodland Junior High and the new high school, one of the first in the South to integrate in the 1950s.

Generously and often anonymously, he and Marie contributed to worthy causes which helped the people of Washington County. To learn more, the book "Paved in Faith" by Dr. Nancy Hendricks, a biography of Clark and Marie McClinton, is available at the Fayetteville Public Library.

MRS. YOUNG AND HER BUILDING*

By Willard B. Gatewood

A small but impressive building located on the west side of the Town Square in Fayetteville, Arkansas has long aroused the curiosity of both local residents and out-of-town visitors. What especially intrigues people about the structure is the highly visible inscription on the façade of the building above the second floor that reveals the date, 1887, below which appears the name Mrs. Young. The question most frequently asked is: Who was Mrs. Young? Notwithstanding the speculations, some serious, some facetious, the correct answer is that Mrs. S.J. Young was a well-known local photographer who had the building constructed in 1887 and maintainer her photographic studio on its second floor for a decade. Local tradition has it that the office of Mrs. Young's husband, Dr. S. J. Young, a dentist, occupied the first floor. Dr. Young was indeed a dentist, but he never had an office in the building, and his initials were not S.J.

Mrs. Young was a native of Illinois and the wife of Dr. H.R. Young, a "dental surgeon," who claimed to employ the most up-to-date methods of his profession. Dr. Young listed Springfield, Missouri as his home, but he too was a native of Illinois. He traveled from place to place plying his profession; therefore he was known as a "traveling dentist." Fayetteville newspapers initiated a flurry of publicity in advance of his visit to the town that took place in May 1877. He rented a front room over the store of McIlroy and Van Hoose and announced that he would remain in Fayetteville for two weeks to perform all kinds of "work in the dental line." Dr. Young advertised as follows: "(I) will insert a beautiful upper or lower set of gum teeth for $12 or a full set for $20." He also boasted of possessing a "burring engine," a dental drill, that enabled him "to fill teeth in less time, (for) less money and (with) greater comfort." Following his visit, Dr. Young disappeared from the public record, but one consequence of his use of the burring engine was the immediate purchase of such a device by Dr. R.B. Horton, a long-time "resident dentist" in Fayetteville.

The Mrs. Young building as it looks today on the Fayetteville Square

In 1877 Mrs. Young, then known as Mrs. H.R. Young, appears to have accompanied her husband to Fayetteville where she may well have had friends or relatives - or both. Certainly, many of the town's residents were natives of Illinois and Missouri. At the time, Fayetteville was undergoing rapid

growth, so much so that one observer noted that "immigration into our city is so rapid of late that one scarcely knows half the people he meets on the streets." Mrs. Young, already a photographer, either remained in Fayetteville after her husband had departed or returned shortly thereafter. The Youngs had a son, Charley Young, born in 1877, in Arkansas and probably in Fayetteville. When the census was taken in 1880, Mrs. Young, listed as Jesie Young, resided in the home of Linn Duke, a local jeweler and his wife; she may have been a relative of one of the Dukes. The census-taker described her as a married woman and a "photographic artist," but made no mention of a child. Mrs. Young assumed the name of Mrs. S.J. Young; the initials stood for Sarah Jesie. Because of her son, she probably chose to identify herself as Mrs. Young.

On November 8, 1882, Mrs. Young filed for divorce from her husband on the grounds of desertion. Her petition to the court used neither the term desertion nor abandonment, but rather asserted that her husband, Dr. H.R. Young, was a "non-resident of the state" of Arkansas. Dr. Young did not contest the divorce and was not present for the divorce proceedings. The divorce became final in January 1883, when Judge J.M. Pittman of the Chancery Court "dissolved the bonds of matrimony" between the Youngs and restored to Mrs. Young "all the rights and privileges of a single woman." He gave her "the exclusive custody and care" of her son and directed that she retain all property currently in her possession against "any claim thereunto by the said defendant (Dr. Young)." The court records nowhere indicate that Mrs. Young requested or received any support from Dr. Young for herself or for their son. She paid "the costs of the suit."

By the time her divorce was final, Mrs. Young was already the owner of property in Fayetteville, having purchased in October, 1881, a lot (Lot 3 of Block 1) located "in the subdivision of the town," known as the Masonic addition. Sixteen years later, 1897, she contracted to have a commodious resident constructed on this lot at a cost of $1,785. The contract with her builder that was duly filed in the county clerk's office contained detailed plans, specification, total cost, and architect's drawings of the proposed dwelling. When the builder presented a bill

substantially more than the amount stipulated in the contract, Mrs. Young refused to pay more than the contracted price. The builder then attempted to encumber her lot; she sued him, and after a protracted and complex legal battle, she won the case.

In 1884, the year after her divorce, Mrs. Young purchased for $600 a part of Lot 2 in Block 26 on the west side of Town Square. This property was 200 feet wide and 155 feet deep. Sometime during or after 1884 she maintained a photographic studio in a modest wooden structure on this lot. That structure was demolished to make way for a much more substantial and attractive building that she had constructed on the site - a building that still stands and bears her name more than a century later.

The lot adjacent to Mrs. Young's on the Square was also owned by a woman, Annie E. Pettigrew, the wife of James R. Pettigrew. She, too, planned to construct a building on her lot. Since both Young and Pettigrew contemplated two-story brick structures, they executed a legal agreement on June 21, 1887, designed to facilitate the exterior access to the second story of each building. The agreed that the north wall of Young's building would be constructed at her expense but would be "a partnership wall for one story only to be constructed to support joists and otherwise." They also agreed to construct a flight of stairs, five feet wide, to be located entirely on Pettigrew's property. Mrs. Young was to be responsible for the cost of constructing the stairs and for their maintenance, although they were to be used jointly by both parties. A hall to commence at the head of the stairs was to extend to the west end of Mrs. Young's building and was to be "kept open for the light and air for the mutual use and benefit of both parties."

The construction of Mrs. Young's building moved toward completion at a rapid pace. When completed, the structure was 20 feet wide and 81.25 feet deep. It rested on a rock foundation and its exterior was brick. By 1892, according to the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, the structure had acquired an ironclad front designed and made by the prestigious St. Louis firm of Mesker and Brothers and a large skylight in its north wall. Mrs. Young later added decorative wood scroll work and an iron balcony to the front exterior of her building. There was no

interior stairway in the building; to reach the second story one had to ascend the exterior stairway that opened directly off the street. Mrs. Young designed the building in such a way as to provide maximum privacy both for her photographic studio on the second floor and whatever business occupied the first floor.

By November 1887, the second story and the stairs had been sufficiently complete to allow Mrs. Young to establish her photographic studio there. When the lower story was completed shortly afterward, its first occupant was Blakeley Brothers, Grocers, but a year later in 1888 Mrs. Young leased the lower floor of her building to the Bank of Fayetteville (no connection with the present day Bank of Fayetteville) that had been organized that year by Judge Lafayette Gregg, a well-known resident of the town. After the bank moved to a new location on the Town Square in 1890, the lower story of the Mrs. Young building was occupied by a succession of businesses including a confectionery, restaurant, millinery shop, dry goods store, jewelry store and most recently a ladies fashion shop.

By the time Mrs. Young's building was completed and she had established her photography studio there, Fayetteville was in the midst of an extraordinary growth and expansion. In the decade of the 1880s the town's population increased dramatically. The arrival of the railroad in 1881 - the San Francisco and St. Louis Railway, known as the Frisco - accelerated immigration and transformed Fayetteville into a major distribution center for a large area of northwest Arkansas. The proliferation of financial institutions reflected the town's growth and prosperity. The economic center of the town was the area around the Town Square. "There were no stores away from the square" until the 1890s, according to one authority. In the 1880s numerous new mercantile establishments, wholesale and retail groceries, lumber yards, restaurants, and an opera house opened on or near the Square. Most professional offices were concentrated in the area. The decade of the 1880s also witnessed the establishment of a telephone company and the Fayetteville Electric Light and Power Company, as well as the expansion of the local public school system and Arkansas Industrial University (the University of Arkansas).

The growth and increasing prosperity of Fayetteville and

surrounding communities contributed to Mrs. Young's personal prosperity. The income from her expanding photographic business, coupled with the rent generated by the first floor of her building and perhaps other properties, enabled her to earn a comfortable livelihood for herself and her son and to build a large attractive residence in a fashionable district. She indisputably proved that she was altogether capable of competing in a male-dominated profession and business environment. Her principal competitors in Fayetteville were C.C. Cook and John W. Hansard, both of whom were well-known, established photographers in the area. According to Polk's Arkansas Gazette and Business Directory, Mrs. Young was one of the only two female photographers in Arkansas in 1888. Four years later, in 1982, she and three other women were the only female photographers in the state out of a total of eighty-seven such practitioners.

Where and under what circumstances Mrs. Young learned photography is unclear, but from the beginning of her residence in Fayetteville she used her expertise in photography to make a living. Other women in Fayetteville in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also earned a livelihood but they pursued gender specific and often home-based occupations, such as seamstresses, milliners, and operators of boarding houses. Fortunately for Mrs. Young, photography was one of the relatively few professions dominated by men that was open to women in the 1880s. Nationally, the field attracted an increasing number of women, notably middle class women, in the decades following the Civil War. Women became photographers in part because of changes slowly taking place in society that allowed them to move beyond the domestic sphere to embark on careers outside the home. That so many women chose photography was also related to technological innovations in the field, especially in the manufacture of dry plates in the 1870s that eliminated the necessity of portable dark rooms. Photographic equipment became less cumbersome and could be easily transported. In the 1880s the substitution of celluloid for glass as a negative base, the perfection of hand cameras, the appearance of more carefully crafted lenses, and other developments combined to make photography less tedious and

less a mater of trial and error. Mrs. Young, therefore, embarked on a career in photography not only at a time when such a profession provided respectable work for women, but also when the technical aspects of photography were making rapid advances.

Although Mrs. Young did not advertise in local newspapers as her competition did, she nonetheless acquired an enviable reputation as a photographic artist. She specialized in individual and group portraits and was the artist of choice for many of the leading families and organizations in Washington County. Extant photographs by Mrs. Young found in the Washington County Historical Collection (Mullins Library, University of Arkansas), the Shiloh Museum in Springdale, and elsewhere clearly indicate that she was a skilled and talented practitioner of her craft.

In the mid-1890s Mrs. Young began to withdraw from her photography enterprise. Another local photographer, C.E. Watton, leased her studio in 1896. Although the local press indicated that Watton bought the Mrs. Young Building, that was not the case. He merely "operated" Mrs. Young's studio and gallery. Watton became a prominent local photographer and for

Now restored, the Mrs. Young building still bears her name.

a time had the contract for the photographs in The Cardinal, the yearbook of the Arkansas Industrial University. Sometime in 1901 he opened his own studio/gallery elsewhere in Fayetteville, but two years later sold it and moved to Chillocothe, Ohio.

In mid-1901 Burch Enos Grabill leased Mrs. Young's studio/gallery. A native of Ohio who had served as a United States photographer during the Spanish-American War, Grabill became a popular figure in northwest Arkansas and invited Mrs. Young's patrons "to continue their patronage at the same place," namely "upstairs in the Mrs. Young Building." He advertised extensively in local newspapers. His advertisements regularly called attention to the collections of photographs that he had for sale, especially those taken in the Philippines during his tour of duty in the islands while in the army. Grabill remained in the photographic business in Fayetteville for about fifteen years. For much of that period his studio was on the second floor of Mrs. Young's building, but he remained a tenant, rather than the owner, of the building.

Despite Mrs. Young' prominence as a photographer, she remains an elusive figure. Her personal life appears to have been intensely private. Her name rarely appeared in the personal and social columns of Fayetteville's three extant newspapers, The Democrat, The Arkansas Sentinel, and The Republican. The first reference to her in The Democrat appeared in the issue of March 25, 1887, when it noted that "Mrs. Young goes to St. Louis today to visit her son," who was then ten years old. Whether the boy was in school or living with relatives or friends is not known. Another reference to Mrs. Young appearing in The Republican (October 7, 1887) read: "Mrs. S.J. Young left on the Tuesday afternoon Frisco train to Clinton, Illinois, where she will visit for about ten days with her brother whom she has not seen since he was two years old. Mrs. Young has been quite busy of late months and this rest will be beneficial to her." This items reveals that Mrs. Young still had relatives in Illinois. That she had "been quite busy of late months" undoubtedly refers to her photography business and to the construction of her building on the Square.

In contrast to her personal life, her professional and business

careers are more amply documented, especially in records located in the Washington County Courthouse. Legal documents, including mortgages, deeds, court cases, and various agreements, found there suggest that she was extraordinarily resourceful and shrewd in business matters. These documents reveal that she regularly used her building on the Town Square as collateral to secure loans to purchase photographic equipment and to acquire additional property. They also clearly indicate that she paid off her loans on schedule.

After Mrs. Young retired in the mid-1890s and leased her studio to Watton and then to Grabill, she traveled extensively visiting relatives and friends. She spent time in St. Louis in 1901, visited her son and his wife in Kansas City for a month in the fall of 1902, and stayed a year and half with a brother in Los Angeles in 1902-1904. Her son, Charley Young, returned to Fayetteville in 1903 to visit friends and "look after his mother's property" in the city. In 1905 and 1906 Mrs. Young was in Atchison, Kansas, for various lengths of time. Then, in 1907, after living and working in Fayetteville for almost thirty years, she sold her building on the Town Square for $7,000 to Charles H. Bell, a local businessman and banker, and moved away from Fayetteville permanently. The place and date of her death have not been ascertained. Nor is there any evidence that she pursued photography after leaving Fayetteville.

Within a few months after purchasing the Mrs. Young Building, Bell sold it for $7,850 to J.M. Cook and his wife, Rachel James Cook who operated a jewelry store in its first floor for many years beginning in 1908. In 1941 Cook's widow, Rachel, leased the building to A.D. McAllister, Sr., and wife Matilda, who purchased it four years later. They operated a ladies' fashion shop in the building until 1961. The property then passed to their son, A.D. McAllister, Jr., a prominent Fayetteville attorney, and his wife Virginia. The latter continued to operate a ladies' apparel store there under the same name, Matilda's, Inc., until her retirement in 1998.

In that year the Bank of Fayetteville purchased the Mrs. Young Building. Organized in 1987, the Bank of Fayetteville was located in the renovated/restored Lewis Brothers Hardware Store that had been built on the lot once owned by Annie

Pettigrew. The bank, therefore, was next door to the Mrs. Young Building and separated from it only by the exterior stairway that was the subject of an agreement between Young and Pettigrew a century earlier. The Bank of Fayetteville undertook an extensive restoration/renovation of Mrs. Young's building, and the two structures were connected at the head of the stairway that had previously separated them. The carefully restored façade of Mrs. Young's building preserved the original inscription in its apex - 1887 Mrs. Young - and the inscription still attracts attention.

The Mrs. Young Building is reputed to be the oldest existing brick structure on the Town Square. In its more than a century of existence it has had six owners and numerous tenants who have represented a wide variety of business interests. Interestingly, the first Bank of Fayetteville was one of its earliest occupants and the second Bank of Fayetteville is its most recent owner. In 2002 the Mrs. Young Building stands as a visible reminder of a remarkably modern woman of the nineteenth century, who as a divorced single parent succeeded against daunting odds. Appropriately, the building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999.

This essay is based primarily on research in legal documents found in the Washington County Courthouse; Fayetteville newspapers; various collections in the Special Collections Division, Mullins Library, University of Arkansas and Shiloh Museum in Springdale; the federal census records; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps; state and local business directories; several articles in Flashback, historical accounts of Fayetteville and Washington County; Naomi Rosenblum, A History of Women Photographers (New York: Abbeville Press, 1994); Peter Palmquest, "Photographers in Petticoats," Journal of the West, (May, 1984). 45-48.

Farmington nurseryman shipped native plants around the world in 1920s.

By Lynn Rogers

Ralph Shreve, a descendant of pre-Civil War settlers in Farmington, was a local legend and a Renaissance man. He was a Naturopathic physician, a plant expert and collector, a nurseryman, farmer and surveyor.

Living in a boarding house in Fayetteville during the week to attend high school, Shreve graduated valedictorian of his class and attended the University of Arkansas for two years. He transferred to the University of Chicago and was awarded a degree in Naturopathy. Shreve practiced naturopathic medicine for many years.

He married Janie Belle Wilson, a registered Cherokee, and returned to his homeplace on Goose Creek in Farmington. Its name came from the many geese the Wilson and Shreve women kept on the farm. The spring-fed creek has supplied water to the houses on the farm since 1851.

Early in 1920, Shreve became interested in botany and horticulture and plant collecting. His hobby soon led to a career as he established a plant nursery on the farm where tobacco and apple trees once grew. Specializing in native ferns, wildflowers, shrubs and vines, in his catalog for 1927-1928, the prices ranged from 25 cents for one Dutchman's Breeches to one dollar for a six-foot Pale Dogwood (Cornus obliqua).

A variety of Blue Flag was named for him, (Iris shrevei), described as a white-bordered pale blue beardless flowered plant which thrives in dry, limestone soil, but prefers moist places. Today this iris is called (Iris virginica, variety shrevei).

The Shreve Farm nursery also supplied plants for landscaping in Fayetteville and cut flowers for local florists. Their five children helped to wrap and package the peonies, irises and daffodils that were delivered to the surrounding areas. Mrs. Catherine Foster, a daughter who still lives on the homeplace, recalls that there was always plenty of work to do. She also remembers that famous plantsmen often visited their farm. Among those was Dr. Dwight Moore of the University of Arkansas and author of "Trees of Arkansas", D. M. Andrews, Dr.

A Nelson, C. P. Smith, and Herbert Durand, author of "Wild Flowers and Ferns" and "My Wild Flower Garden."

Shreve highly recommended the books of his friends, Durand and Louise Beebe Wilder "These books not only contain much valuable information but are so charmingly written that you will fall under the spell of the wildflowers these talented authors portray."

Foster has collected photos of the farm and letters and plant orders from all over the United States and world. Botanical gardens in New York, Missouri, at Yale and Harvard, and Schreiner's Iris Co., ordered irises and other native plants from Shreve.

Native irises were exceptionally popular. Many of the letters and orders requested Crested Iris (Iris cristata), Lamance Iris (I. brevicaulis), Copper Iris (I. fulva) and Dwarf Iris (I. verna).

Kew, the Royal Botanic Gardens outside of London, placed a large order of 31 different species in multiples of three to five plants. Orders also came from Christchurch, New Zealand and Geneva, Switzerland. The plants ranged from wildflowers like the Crested Iris to the Purple Cliffbrake fern (Pellaea atropurpurea) to shrubs like the Vernal Witch Hazel (Hamamelis vernalis).

When the Great Depression hit the United States, trade in flowers and plants tapered off so Shreve continued to work on the family farm which provided vegetables, fruit, eggs, beef and other staples. He also began helping his father, Walter Shreve, the County Assessor, with surveying. After his father's death in 1939, Shreve continued surveying for Washington County. After a request from the judge, he officially was elected as surveyor in 1954 and served until 1964, which made 125 years of surveying service in Washington County by Shreve and his ancestors. Today his grandson, Frank Blew, carries on the tradition of County Surveyor

He received the Washington County Historical Society's Distinguished Citizen citation for significant contributions to the community and history of the area. He passed away in 1983 at the age of 87. His interest in plants continued to be a joy throughout his life.

The Shannon – Fisher War

By Bob Keen

During the Civil War and immediately after, numerous murders were committed in Washington County. One of the most famous and deadly feuds arose in the Evansville area, and was to be known thereafter as the Shannon-Fisher War. There have been many versions of this feud, but I will attempt to relay it as best I can from the stories I have been told.

In 1868 the feud between the Shannons and the Fishers, and people loyal to each side, broke out. All the parties lived near Evansville, Arkansas. It seems far fetched that such a feud could occur in this small country town that today has only a post office, beauty shop, and a cafe.

However, Evansville in 1868 was considered the major gateway to the Indian Nation. It was reported at around this time that there were fifteen saloons and six to eight mercantile stores, at which you could buy whiskey. There was even supposed to be several houses of ill repute. Ben Greer said in his memoirs that it was not unusual to find dead transients every day in Evansville.

The feud began over a gambling debt. Major Fisher had won all the money from a sixteen-year-old boy named, M.K. (Maurice) Shannon. In a last ditch effort to regain his losses, the boy put up his father's horse for thirty dollars, but lost it, too. Shortly after this M.K.'s father, Grandville Shannon, chastised Major Fisher for enticing his under-age son into gambling. Mr. Shannon convinced Major Fisher to return the thirty dollars, the value of the horse.

About a week later, the Fisher boys caught M.K. in a saloon in Evansville, put a gun in his mouth and demanded the thirty dollars. While they were arguing, Finis Shannon entered the saloon. He was M.K's older brother. He pulled out his pistol and shot Major Fisher through the head, killing him on the spot. Fine Shannon was tried by the local Justice of the Peace and released. Soon after this, John Fisher returned from southern Arkansas and had Fine arrested and taken to Fayetteville, Arkansas. He was then tried again and was again found not guilty and released. The Fishers returned to Evansville and

vowed to kill Shannon, but he hid out. Dr. Jack McKinney, the father-in-law of Fine Shannon, attempted to raise a posse to drive the Fisher clan from the area.

One morning in February of 1869, McKinney went into G.W. McClure's store to purchase weapons and supplies for his posse. John Fisher followed him into the store and without one word pulled his gun and shot him through the heart. John Fisher went to Mrs. Alberty's where he got reinforcements -- Calvin Carter and Charlie Bush. The three men then mounted horses and, armed to the teeth, rode up and down the streets of Evansville shooting in every direction. After this was over, the three of them rode out of town into the Indian Nation. In a short time Fine and M.K. Shannon, along with John and M.W. Finley, J.W. Bell, and John Brotherton, were in hot pursuit of Fisher and his reinforcements. After eight miles, the men divided into two parties and circled around towards Evansville. Bell, Finley, and Brotherton along with M.K., were the first to return to Evansville, stopping at the store where McKinney had been killed.

Unknown to them, Fisher and his men had already returned to town and were laying in ambush at the Gillets store across the street. The Fishers opened fire, wounding Sam Alberty in the hip. Mr. Alberty was a innocent bystander. At this time, the rest of the Shannon posse returned to town and there was quite a gun fight in the streets of Evansville. There wasn't a lot of damage done, other than a few horses lost. Matters then quieted down for a few weeks, while each group watched every move that the other group made. At this time the Fishers were joined by the famous outlaw Scott Reed and one of his riding buddies, who was thought to be Frank James.

Not long after this, the Fishers held a dance in Evansville. The Shannons, along with Sheriff Ben Little and a posse of about thirty men, attempted to capture the Fishers, for whom Governor Clayton had issued a warrant in the murder of Dr. McKinney. They attacked with guns blazing, killing Scott Reed in the first fire. But the Fishers rallied their men and drove the Sheriff's posse back into the nearby stables. They then took refuge in the house of their sisters, who they held hostage. The two parties continued their positions for some two or three

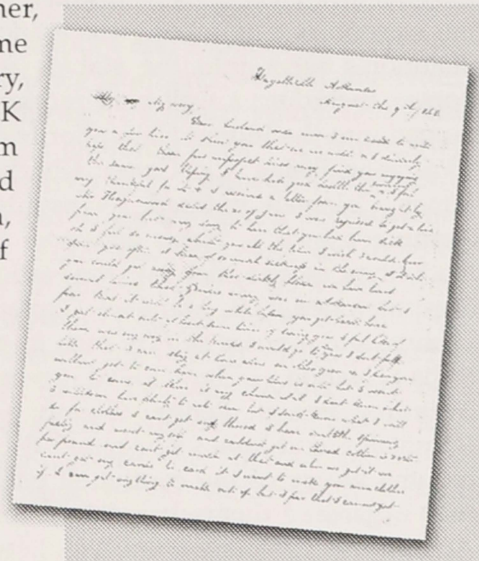
hours. The Fishers made their escape during the night into Indian territory on foot.

Sheriff Little confiscated the Fisher's horses and left for Fayetteville. The Fisher sisters filed a lawsuit against the sheriff, but as soon as a judgment was made in favor of the sisters, the Shannon's went into the stables and killed all the Fisher's horses, including a well-bred racehorse. After this, the sisters moved into the Indian Nation for fear of their lives. On June 2, 1869, John Fisher, Cal Carter, Charlie Bush, James Reed, and James Coleman entered Evansville and killed two of the Shannon's men -- Noah Fitzwater and Newton Stout -- and made their escape back into the Nation. Governor Clayton then commissioned U.S. Marshall Captain Anderson of Crawford County and a posse of fifty men to pursue the Fishers into the Indian Nation. They killed several of the men on sight, including two in Benton County -- a man by the name of Edminston and James Coleman. By this time, the citizens had become weary of the continued outbursts and gunfights, and they organized themselves into a company to keep the peace. Among this company were A.G. Lewis, William Littlejohn and Deputy U.S. Marshall Adair. They forced the Fishers to leave the area and some peace prevailed in the area.

However, Captain Anderson was determined to hunt down the Fisher gang once and for all. He found John Fisher and killed him in Indian Nation. They found four of the gang in Lindsey Prairie, in Benton County, where they surrounded the house. Captain Anderson didn't realizing that he had two Shannon men in his posse, and the two men ran down and emptied their guns killing all four men in the Fisher gang. The last of the Fisher gang, Jim Reed, was killed by a bounty hunter in Paris, Texas, on August 10, 1874. In all, there were eight men of the Shannon's clan and 12 of the Fisher's gang that died in this feud, not counting the dozens that had been wounded. Once again there was calm in the Lord's Vineyard.

More Woodruff Letters

The following are copies of two Civil War letters. They were written to Capt. J.N. Woodruff from his wife and his mother, coincidentally on the same day in 1862. The February, 2000, edition of FLASHBACK contained several letters from Captain Woodruff submitted by his great-grandson, Wayne Woodruff Pyeatt of Memphis, Tennessee.



Copy of a part of a letter from Mrs. Mattie Woodruff to her husband Capt. J.N. Woodruff.

Mr. J.N. Woodruff
16th Arks Regiment
Infant vol first Brigade
Army of the west
Fayetteville, Arkansas
August 9th 1862

My very
Dear husband once more I am seated to write you a few lines to show you that we are well & I sincerely hope that these few imperfect lines may find you enjoying the same good blessing. I have had good health this summer & I feel very thankful for it & I received a letter from you brought by Mr. Hagerwood dated the 21 of June. I was rejoyced to get a line from you but very sorry to hear that you had been sick, oh I feel so uneasy about you all the time. I wish I could hear from you often. I hear of so much sickness in the army. I wish you could get away from that sickly place. We have heard several times that Prices army was in Arkansaw but I fear it will be a long while before you get back here. I get almost out of heart some times of seeing you. I feel like if there was any way in the world I would go to see you. I don't feel like that I can stay at home alone an other year & I fear you will not get to come home when your time is out but I want you to come if there is any chance at

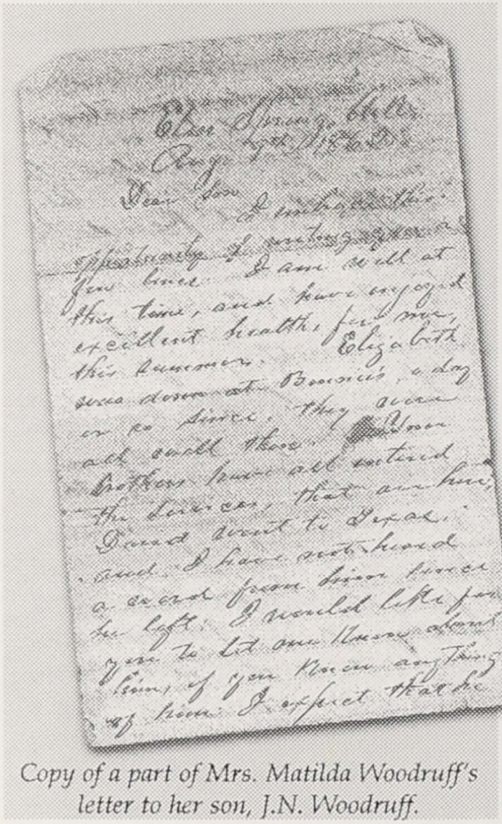
all. I dont know what I will do. We have plenty to eate now but I do not know what I will do for clothes. I cant get any thread, I have sent to the spinning factory and went myself and could not get one thread. Cotton is 20 cents per pound and cant get much at that and when get it we cant get any cards to card it. I want to make you some clothes if I can get anything to make out of but I feat that I cannot get anything and I know that you kneed them and I know that you are out of socks unless you have met with good luck to get some. You have three or four good paid at home; I wish you had them.

O my dearest Jeppie you know not how bad I want to see you. I think about you being so far from home and may be lying in somewhere burning with fever & no person to wait on you or hand you a drink of water, oh it troubles me so I cannot bear to think about it. I would be better satisfied if I could stay with you. I know it would be tuff getting along but I think I could stand it as long as you can and if it was not for my sweet little babes I would stay with you while I live, life is no satisfaction without you. O if I knew that you would come home when your time is out I could rest easy. I still hope that you may come but there is dim prospect of it now. Oh my Jeppie I miss you so much let me go where I will think of you. The world and all it inhabitants would not be company for me like you. Oh I do hope & trust the time is not far distant when you and I may embrace each others arms to be parted not more till we are parted by death. You are ever present in my memory. You are the 1st one that I think of night when I retire to rest and the first one that I think of in the morning when I awake from my slumber. I was sorry to hear you was Captain of a company. I know that you will be in much danger of a battle but I know that the good Lord is able to bless in a battlefield as well as anywhere else so I will try to comfort myself with the hope the Good will be with you and bless you at all time which I believe he will ever do if we will trust in him. Well I will tell you about our wheat, we have got it thrashed and put away; we had 120 bushels but I expect it will take half of it to pay for getting it out. I would rather paid the money than the wheat but the Feds was coming in here and I didnot know but they would take it all from us and I thought it best to pay the wheat. We wont make any corn atal,

it was never ploughed but once. No garden of any kind I had one bushel of potatoes planted & will never get half a bushed out of the patch. Cattle and hogs are both dying here we havent lost any cattle but some of our hogs is dead. I don't know how many. I am afraid they will all die for we will have nothing to feed them though the winter. We dont kneed them and I am afraid the soldiers will kill them for beef, they are all in very good order. I dont know how I will get along through the winter if you dont come home. Mr. Rofs (?) is going back to Missouri this fall. Oh my Jeppie I miss you, things dont go like they did when you was here. You never saw a place go down as fast as this has. Then fencing is knocked down around so they cant be another crop made until the fence is repaired. You told me if you didnt get home in time to get some body to sew wheat for us but it would be useless to sew anything until the fence was repaired, the stock would destroy it all. We have had a very dry summer, corn is generally backward and wheat not very good. We had a very good rain last night the first we have had in some time. Well I will close my letter as I am not interesting you. I hope to hear from you soon. This leaves me and the little ones well. My ma is here she sends her best withes to you. Your mother and aunt Betsy is well, I saw them a few days ago. All the rest of our folks is well as far as I know. Tell John Barnet that his folks are well, I was at his fathers a few days ago. Mr. Woodruff I will quit for this time as I have nothing new, write me as often as you can, I am anxious to know when you are coming home.

So goodbye my much love Jeppie so good by from your own

Mattie



Copy of a part of Mrs. Matilda Woodruff's letter to her son, J.N. Woodruff.

Capt. J.N. Woodruff
16th Ark Reg.
1st Brigade, 1st Div
Army of the west

Elm Springs, Ark.
Aug. 9th 1862

Dear Son

I embrace this opportunity of writing you a few lines. I am well as this time, and have enjoyed excellent health, for me this summer. Elizabeth was down at Bonnies a day or so since, they were all well then. The (?) brothers have all entered the services that are here. David went to Tezas and I have not heard a word from him since he left. I would like for you to let me know anything of him, I expect that he is in the service too. Matt was up here on the 6th inst; She was well. Sister was well also. The babe was teething, which made him fretful. Elizabeth and family is well. All the old friend around here are well. Mrs. Barden and family is well.

Son - I want you to remember your devotion to Almighty God, for in his hands are the causes of life and death. You are exposed to the contaminating influences of camp life. You must ask God to keep you harmless and blameless crooked and (?) in this day and time.

Ask God for his grace, which is sufficient for any emergency that you may come off (?) than conquer through him that loved you and gave himself for you. Son I hope that you read your

bible at every (?) opportunity. And above all I hope that you trust in God implicitly for he will guide aright. We all would be very glad to see you, but things are so that we cannot at this time. We hope for a better day when we will all be at home enjoying the same. If this letter reaches you, please write an answer to it at your earliest convenience, as we are very anxious to hear from you. Elizabeth sends her love. You will also accept the love from your mother.

Matilda Woodruff.

Bethlehem Church

By Bob Keen

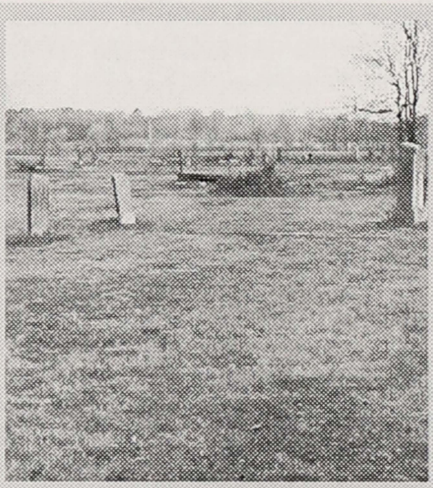
Washington County once had its own Bethlehem. Even though there was no Savior born there, He was praised and worshiped in the little Bethlehem Church in what was then the Bethlehem Community.

This community was on the banks of Fly Creek, where the Bethlehem Cemetery is now. The church set on what was then the main road from Vineyard to Cane Hill. The original church was a structure of logs built in 1827. In 1876, a frame church was built on the same side. Bethlehem Methodist M. E. Church was probably the first church organized in Washington County. According to the church records, it was in existence in April of 1827. This was approximately one year before the Canehill Presbyterian Church was established. In 1827, James Bankston was the pastor of Bethlehem Church. According to church records, members came from the communities of Bethlehem, Vineyard,

Bethlehem Cemetary

Dutch Mills, Cane Hill, and Sugar Hill.

Old Bethlehem Church was active in missions to the Indians. Two of the preachers who were especially active in the mission field were John Harrell and David B. Cummings. They built a Methodist campground, where Salem Springs is now. The name of that campgrounds was Mountain Springs Methodist Camp. The first Methodist Conference in Washington County was held there on September 12, 1833. The presiding Bishop was Joshua Soule. In later years this campground was renamed Salem Springs. Around the 1840s, a community sprang up around the campgrounds that was called Sexton, named after pioneer preacher Jacob Sexton.



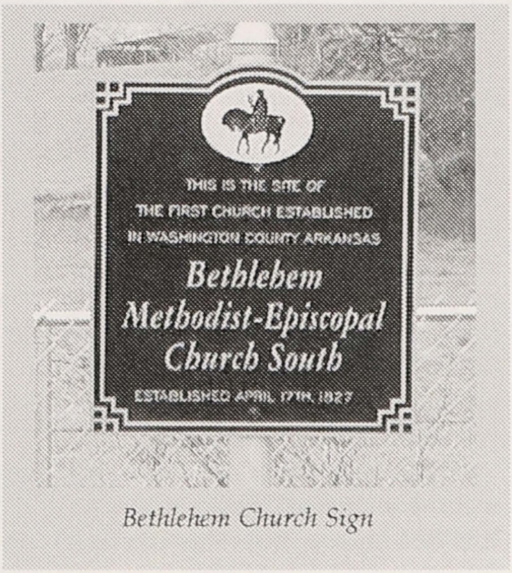
Bethlehem Cemetary - Looking South

The Bethlehem Church had many pioneer families as members. It also started a cemetery on the north side of church. It is not known who was the first person buried there, but the first recorded burial was Jane Carnahan. She died New Years Day, 1832. The next burial was the Pyeatt children in 1833 and 1834. The Hayles family were killed by Indians on what is known as Hale Mountain in 1835 and are buried in Bethlehem cemetery. Benjamin Hayles' tombstone can still be read today, but Jacob's and Leah's stones have disappeared.

One of Bethlehem's most notable members was lay preacher Thomas Tennant, who joined the church in 1829. He had the distinction of being the oldest man ever to live in Washington County. According to the London England Methodist Church records, he was the oldest Methodist Preacher to ever live. He lived to be one hundred and fourteen years old. He was also on the board of directors that built Bethesda Academy, which later

became Bethesda School. Thomas Tennant died October 9, 1885. His funeral was held in the Bethlehem Church and he is buried in the Bethlehem Cemetery. The services were conducted by Reverend George Morrow, the man who founded the town of Morrow, Arkansas.

The church survived a lot of tragedies, including the Civil War. However, around the turn of the century, the county became more populated, and the little community of Bethlehem ceased to be. Between 1910 and 1912, the men of the church got together, put skids under the church, and used mules to drag the church to the town of Morrow. After the church was moved, it was no longer known as Bethlehem Methodist Church. It was renamed the Morrow United Methodist Church. Here it continued to be a church until 1951, when the Methodist bought the Presbyterian Church of Morrow and changed it to the Methodist Church of Morrow. It is still in use today. Arville Loftin bought the old Bethlehem building and tore it down, using the lumber to build his house on Highway 45 west of Clyde in 1953.

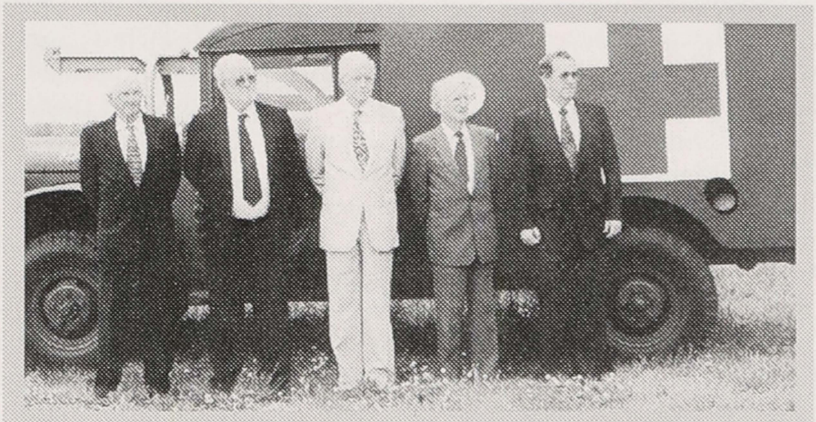


Bethlehem Church Sign

The last entry of someone joining the church was C. W. Reed, November 7, 1910. Ren David was married there in 1905 to Alice Pyeatt of Cane Hill. This was a three-couple wedding. John Maples married a David girl, and Henry David married Jenny Maloy. The last registered pastor was Charles Edwards, who became pastor November 18, 1908. The Methodists were still holding Camp Meetings at Salem Springs until the 1940's. The town of Sexton died out because the railroad went through Oklahoma, and the post office closed in 1903. Mr. Fields was the

last postmaster.

The list of Ministers for the Bethlehem Methodist Church are as follows, James Bankston, 1827; John Henry, 1828; Pleasant Tackett, 1832; John Harrell, 1831; A. M. Scott and Alvin Baird, 1832; William G. Duke, 1833; H. G. Jafstin, 1834; John Harrell, 1835; William Bump, 1836; Burwell Lee and Hirum Gering, 1837; Stewart Jacob Chandler and Jerome Annis, 1838; Andrew Hunter, 1839; Jacob Custer, 1840; W. A. Cobb and William J. Anderson, 1841; David B. Cummings and Steven P. Carlisle, 1842; H. C. Boyers,1843; John Harrell and Alexander Avery, 1845; Thomas Stafford, 1846; Lewis S. Marshall, 1848; A. M. Morgan, 1849; Louis P. Lively, 1851; Young Ewing, 1852; Jordan Banks, 1854; John Mathes, 1855; Walter L. Thornberry, 1856; David Carithers, 1857; Lewis Woods,1859; Jacob W. Shook, 1860; William Mathis, 1861; Thomas J. Smith, 1866; Henry T. Gregory, 1868; James Grant, 1869; Robert C. Atchley, 1870; David Sturdy, 1872; A. K. Miller, 1873; Gerome Harrelson, 1874; Richard Trydings, 1875; Theodore T. Brewer, 1876; S. H. Johnston, 1878; William J. Stone, 1879; Steven F. Dykes, 1881; Preston Hopkins, 1885; James A. Walden, 1886; W. S. Pyeatt, G. F. Pyeatt, George T. Morrow, T. F. Tennant, and J. R. Maxwell, 1890; J. H. Sturdy, 1892; John Clayton, 1894; James J. Holland, 1895; W. Hatfield, 1896; Y. A. Gilmore, 1897; J. P. Humphries, 1898; R. W. Lindsey, 1901; H. D. Hutcheson, 1902; W. J. David and J. S. Hackles, 1904; Fisk Pyeatt and J. B. Griffin, 1905; Charles Edwards, 1908.



From left to right are Quentin, Pierson, Lawrence, Arthur and Dwain Skelton

The Skelton Family's Five Soldiers

By The Skelton Brothers

Eli and Fay Skelton, of the Black Oak Community, Reed Township, Washington County, Arkansas, realized that Americans have only those rights they can defend and they saw five of their seven sons drafted to serve honorably a total of 12 years, 11 months, and 20 days in the U.S. Army. All five returned from their overseas duties unharmed. However, Lawrence was injured just before he was released from active duty in an accident on the hand grenade range at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas.

Arthur was the first son to be called on April 10, 1942. He was inducted at Camp Robinson, Arkansas, served 47 months and 16 days, and was separated from active duty at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, on March 26, 1946. His overseas service was a cook with the 202nd General Hospital, serving in England and France in the European Theater of Operations.

Quentin was the second son to be drafted, with that happening on October 14, 1942. He was inducted from San Francisco, California, served 38 months and 17 days, and was separated from active duty at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri on December 31, 1945. He served a little more than a year as a tank mechanic with Service Company, 43 Tank Battalion, 12th Armored Division, in France and Germany in the European

Theater of Operations.

Lawrence was the third son to go on September 26, 1952. He was inducted at Little Rock, Arkansas, served 24 months and 11 days, and was separated from active duty at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas. His overseas service was with Battery C, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, 40th Infantry Division where he served in the Punch Bowl, Heart Break Ridge, and Bloody Ridge areas of Korea in the Pacific Theater of Operations.

Pierson and Dwain were the fourth and fifth sons to leave for service and were inducted together on August 5, 1954, at Little Rock. Pierson served 21 months and 10 days and was separated from active duty on May 15, 1956, at Fort Hamilton, New York. His overseas duty was as a heavy weapons specialist with H Company, Second Battalion, 47th Infantry Regiment, 9th Infantry Division, stationed at Ulm, Germany.

Dwain served 23 months and 26 days and was separated from active duty on July 31, 1956, at Fort Hamilton, New York. His overseas duty was as a radio mechanic with Headquarters Company, Second Battalion, 47th Infantry Regiment, 9th Infantry Division, stationed at Ulm, Germany.

Four of the five brothers married women from Washington County, while Arthur married a woman from Peoria, Illinois.

NOTE: Major Dwain H. Skelton, Air Force (retired) offered the following advice to all veterans. You may believe that the government has secured your military records, but that may not be correct. The government could not locate any of the military records for the five Skelton brothers, saying the records were apparently destroyed in a fire in July of 1973 at the National Personnel Records Center at St. Louis, Missouri. Veterans should attempt to reconstruct their own military records, since they know when and where they served. They can contact one of the Service Centers at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center. "Your grandchildren will appreciate your efforts," he concluded.

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Please check the type of membership you prefer, fill out the information below, and return this with an appropriate check to the Washington County Historical Society, 118 East Dickson Street, Fayetteville, AR 72701.

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